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**General Assembly**
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**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

**Security Council**
**Sixty-ninth year**

## Identical letters dated 25 August 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I am compelled to again draw your attention to the horrific situation in the Occupied State of Palestine, as we enter the fifty-first day of the Israeli military aggression against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. In the four days since my previous letter to you, Israel, the occupying Power, has not relented with its airstrikes against densely populated civilian areas in Gaza, intentionally killing and injuring more Palestinian civilians, destroying more homes and infrastructure and displacing hundreds more families, in addition to the more than half a million civilians already displaced by this Israeli onslaught against our people, the majority of whom continue to shelter in schools of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. Specifically, the level of premeditated death and destruction imposed on the Gaza Strip by the occupying Power has surpassed merely immoral, inhumane behaviour and constitutes war crimes and crimes against humanity, for which Israel must be held fully accountable.

The stories, photographs and social media voices coming out of Gaza are horrifying and even those cannot convey the extent of the misery being deliberately inflicted by Israel on the Palestinian civilian population, in grave breach of international humanitarian law. The figures since the start of this barbaric aggression in early July now stand as follows: at least 2,130 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces in Gaza, including an estimated 577 children, 261 women and 101 elderly people.

Almost 10,870 other Palestinians, most civilians, have been injured, including some 3,300 children, more than 2,000 women and roughly 400 elderly people. Of those killed during the past seven weeks of Israeli bombardment of Gaza, it is estimated that 90 families have been decimated, with the killing of 530 family members. These shocking figures do not include the dead that have yet to be



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recovered from the rubble of destroyed homes and buildings struck by Israeli missiles and bombs and do not include those who continue to tragically die from wounds sustained in Israeli attacks.

In this regard, Israel's wanton destruction of homes in Gaza has led to the death and the injury of thousands, and reduced entire neighbourhoods to rubble, rendering more than 103,000 Palestinians homeless. Two days ago, on 23 August, Israeli occupying forces intensified such premeditated criminal State acts of destruction by targeting a 12-storey residential building located in the heart of Gaza City. The residential building, Al-Dhafir 4, located in Tal Al-Hawa neighbourhood, was bombarded by two Israeli rockets that caused the entire building to crumble on impact. At least 22 people suffered injuries, including 11 children and 5 women, further contributing to the pain and trauma Palestinian children are tormented by daily. It is estimated that at least 45 families lived in the building; they are now among the hundreds of thousands who are displaced in Gaza and who have lost not only their homes but all of their possessions as a result of such wanton and indiscriminate Israeli attacks. Additionally, on 24 August, Israeli occupying forces destroyed a seven-storey office building and a three-storey shopping centre in Rafah, which had housed dozens of stores and offices used by doctors, lawyers and contractors, further destroying livelihoods and undermining needed civilian services in the suffering, blockaded Gaza.

We emphasize once again that almost all of Gaza's approximately 1.8 million people have been affected by this Israeli military aggression and require basic human necessities such as food, water and shelter, as well as other assistance, for their daily survival and will need extensive humanitarian support for even minimal recovery to begin. Moreover, it must be noted that attempts to deliver aid continue to be threatened and hampered by the ongoing Israeli attacks, decreasing the reach and benefit of aid to those in need during this crisis. The declaration of the Gaza Strip as a "disaster area" is an understatement, in the light of the deepening of this catastrophe with Israel's insistence to continue its destructive and deadly attacks.

Furthermore, the terror, violence and destruction that continue to be waged against the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, as well as in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, by Israel, the occupying Power, are persisting and mounting. While it is impossible to detail in this letter all the violations and war crimes that have been perpetrated, it must be pointed out that Israel, the occupying Power, has not relented in its illegal actions in the West Bank, as well as in killing, injuring and arresting Palestinians, including children, raiding villages and refugee camps, ordering the demolition of homes and persisting with its illegal Israeli settlement campaign.

In addition to the above, the following are some, not all, of the crimes perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people throughout Occupied Palestine, especially in Gaza, in just the four-day period since my previous letter to you:

On 25 August:

- Ten Palestinians were killed in Gaza by Israeli airstrikes and two people died from wounds sustained in earlier attacks, bringing the total number of deaths to at least 12.

- A woman and a child were killed after occupying forces targeted a home in Beit Lahiya and several others were injured.
- Two Palestinians were killed and five were injured in a strike on Radad Tamboura's home in Al-Salatin, west of Beit Lahiya.
- Muhammad Shubeir was killed in an airstrike in Gaza City.
- Hani Muhammad Yasin died of wounds sustained several days previously as a result of an Israeli bombardment on Al-Zaytoun neighbourhood on 22 August.
- Nidal Badawi died from injuries sustained during airstrikes on Rafah.
- A woman, Farhana Attar (age 48), was killed in Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza.
- Yasin Al-Biltaji and Yahya Abu Daqin were killed and dozens were injured when Israeli warplanes fired missiles at a group of people in the Tuffah neighbourhood of Gaza City.
- Seven people were wounded in Jabaliya when an Israeli strike destroyed the Al-Kahlut family home.
- The Al-Ghoul, Nuthur, Karaja and Abu Aun family homes were destroyed in targeted strikes by the Israeli occupying forces.
- The Omar Ibn Abd al-Aziz mosque was destroyed in Beit Hanoun, together with the Ali Ibn Abu Talib mosque in Gaza City.
- Hassan Hazim Abdelhamid Ashour (age 14) succumbed to wounds sustained after being shot in the chest and abdomen by Israeli occupying forces in Beit Furik, east of Nablus.

On 24 August:

- Israeli occupying forces killed seven Palestinians, including a baby girl, Zeina Bilal Abu Taqiyya (age 2), and a teenage boy, Muhammad Wael Al-Khudairi (age 17), and injured dozens more in Gaza's Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood in the central Gaza Strip.
- Five Palestinians from the Joudeh family, including four children, were killed when an Israeli military airstrike hit a house in the Tal Al-Zaatar neighbourhood in northern Gaza. The family members have been identified as Rawia Joudeh and her children Usama (age 6), Mohammed (age 8), Raghd (age 12) and Tansim (age 14).
- Israeli occupying forces fired three missiles at the Rafah crossing targeting the outer hall, which serves as a waiting area, causing major damage.
- The home of Usama Abu Samra in Deir Al-Balah was targeted, killing two people who remain unidentified.
- Yahya Omar Abu Al-Amrin died of wounds sustained in a strike on his home in Abraj Al-Fairuz, north-east of the Gaza Strip. Badr Abu Munei was also killed.
- Seven members of the Al-Ghalayini family were injured in a strike at their home north-west of Gaza.

On 23 August:

- Israeli occupying force airstrikes in Gaza killed 12 Palestinians, including five members of the Dahrouj family in Al-Zawayda, in the central Gaza Strip. The family members were identified as Khalil Shahda Abu Dahrouj (age 28), his wife, Huda Abu Dahrouj (age 26), their two small children, Abdullah and Hadi, and Khalil's aunt, Hayat Abu Dahrouj (age 47).
- Hussein Khaled Ahmad (age 8), his mother, Nisreen Ahmad, and two other people were injured in an airstrike on a home in Deir Al-Balah, in Gaza.
- Israeli occupying forces raided the Al-Jneineh neighbourhood in Rafah, claiming the life of one Palestinian and injuring three others.
- Abdul Rahman Salem Hadayed (age 25) succumbed to injuries he sustained when an Israeli F-16 fighter jet targeted a motorbike in Khan Younis in southern Gaza.
- Mohammed Saber Al-Ajla (age 64), was killed in Johr Al-Deek area in central Gaza.
- Suheir Abu Madyn's body was removed from under the rubble with another unidentified woman at the home of the Al-Mehassin family in Deir Al-Balah.

On 22 August:

- Forty people were injured when Israeli occupying forces struck a house in Al-Sabra neighbourhood in central Gaza.
- Yassin Hamed Abu Hamad (age 22) and Mahmoud Nasser Qashlan (age 23) were killed in an airstrike targeting a group of Palestinians near Ein Jalout in Al-Nusseirat camp in central Gaza.
- Musa Ahmed Al-Abadleh (age 23) was killed in an airstrike at his home in Al-Qarara in Khan Younis. His father, Ahmed Al-Abadleh, was also killed.
- Ismail Abu Abtehan (age 45) succumbed to wounds sustained in an Israeli strike.

These victims are not just numbers. They had lives, like you and I, and they had a right to live that has been taken, brutally and criminally, by Israel, the occupying Power, which clearly believes that force is the answer to everything. They had their coffee in the morning and kissed their children at night or were children who went to bed with their deepest fears and insecurity, never to live to see another day. We mourn their deaths, we grieve with their families and we are pained by the hardship and trauma that continue to be endured by our people in Gaza.

We condemn in the strongest terms these despicable violations by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian civilian population. Israel's nonchalant use of illegal policies against the Palestinian people shows its blatant dismissal of the value of Palestinian lives and of international law and is a symptom of the impunity that Israel has been permitted to enjoy for far too long. We call on the international community, including the Security Council, to condemn all of these illegal, immoral and inhumane Israeli actions against the Palestinian people. These actions must not be accepted as the norm, but must rather be treated as the crimes that they are and all measures must be taken to bring them to an end and to hold perpetrators at all levels responsible. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable for all breaches of international law, humanitarian law and human rights law obligations to

which it is bound. The longer Israel continues to get away with murder with no reprimand or accountability, the longer the Palestinian people will suffer this travesty of justice, adding to the volumes of war crimes already committed by the occupying Power over many decades. The time to act is far overdue and we call on the international community to rise to the occasion and act immediately to uphold its responsibilities in this regard.

We repeat our message to the international community that this disproportionate, agenda-driven assault by Israel, the occupying Power, must come to a halt immediately and that a permanent, comprehensive ceasefire is paramount. We call on the international community to utilize all the political and legal means available to pressure Israel, the occupying Power, to cease the aggressions being waged against the Palestinian people, forcing this already devastating situation into further destabilization that has begun to spiral out of control. More specifically, it is the obligation of the Security Council to carry out its duty to maintain international peace and security. The world is watching and waiting for the Council to act and ensure that international law is upheld, especially with regard to international humanitarian law, addressing the protection of civilians in armed conflict, which the Palestinian civilian population is desperately seeking. Therefore, we insist that the Council act without delay in carrying out its responsibilities under the Charter.

This letter is in follow-up to our 518 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 21 August 2014 (A/ES-10/651-S/2014/610) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer
of the State of Palestine to the United Nations